



## Athletic Events Build a Sense of Community

Posted by [Pierluigi Oliverio](#) on Monday, December 01, 2008

On Thanksgiving Day I participated in the Turkey Trot, a 5-10K run that takes place Downtown. That same day I attended the 63rd annual Big Bone Game between Lincoln High School and San Jose Academy.

The Turkey Trot is a great way to get people out of the house and into our Downtown for a good cause. I spoke to residents from Almaden Valley, Willow Glen, greater Downtown, Alum Rock, Cambrian, the Rose Garden and even Los Gatos, who were all among the approximately 8,000 participants at this year's event.

The staging area for the race was the portion of Guadalupe River Park between the Arena and Highway 87 known as Arena Green. This stretch of the park includes the Children's Carousel, which we spent a lot of Redevelopment (RDA) money to beautify. It makes sense that we have events like this to show off the area. Personally, I would have turned the Carousel on for the Turkey Trot, so people could see it running and tell their friends about the hand-made animals—including a couple of San Jose Sharks.

The Race/Trot itself was fun. We passed Henry's Hi-Life going North through Downtown up the trail and back. Of course there were the serious runners, plus families running together and groups walking. What mattered most was that folks were having fun at a great event in Downtown.

The Big Bone game was held at San Jose City College. The historic rivalry between Lincoln and San Jose Academy always packs the stadium with alumni, students and families. Throw in some snow and this game would be like a Norman Rockwell holiday painting.

San Jose Academy (formerly San Jose High) has a long history, starting back in 1863. It is the second oldest public high school in California. San Jose Academy boasts an International Baccalaureate program, where students take demanding coursework and get college credit. Lincoln High is also a great high school with an outstanding academic program, including visual arts and performing arts programs.

Lincoln won the game by a big margin, and has now captured the Big Bone trophy 37 times in 63 games.

I also attended another athletic event last week—the Willow Glen High School water polo alumni game. Quite the scene, with out-of-practice 40-year-old men vs. the varsity team. Believe it or not, the old guys came through and won the game by a sliver.

The best part of that event was the presence of parents and grandparents who had gone to Willow Glen High, and were watching family members play while sitting alongside their children and grandchildren. Nice to see people near and far getting together and sharing stories about San Jose and the success of Willow Glen High.

Many of our athletic events are school-based and have little to do with city government. I believe that a strong sense of community comes from activities such as these non-professional athletic events. They bring residents together within our great city.

What are some of your favorite San Jose area athletic events that bring people together?

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